

**MINUTES OF GOVERNMENT LABORATORIES MEETING
November 17, 2000 - @ South Florida Water Management District**

ATTENDEES

Bill d'Angelo	USGS
Thomas Allen	City of Vero Bch
Andrea Allen	SFWMD
Lorene Bachman	Lox. River District
Maxine Cheesman	SFWMD
Nubia Carabelas	PB Health Dept.
Howard Cosgrove	FPL
Yong Cai	FIU
Jim Evans	F. Dept of FL.
Tim Fitzpatrick	FDEP
David Hanson	Pinellas Co. Util.
Delia Ivanoff	SFWMD
Rick Keller	SIRWMD
Shree Kundalkar	PB County
Zdzislaw Kolasinski	SFWMD
Susan Noel	Lox River District
David Rich	Univ. of Florida
Mark Rials	SWFWMD
Glynda Russell	Jupiter Laboratory
David Struve	SFWMD
Larry Teich	SFWMD

Introduction - Maxine Cheesman

The Following Papers and Handouts were distributed:

- Agenda - November 17, 2000 Meeting
- Minutes of previous Meetings - July 26, 2000 and September 1, 2000
- Draft Memorandum of Agreement Between Members
of the Florida Government Laboratory Cooperative
- Proposal for MOA - presentation overheads
- Draft QAQC Guidelines
- Council of Florida Government Laboratories

A. Background on Committees:

In accordance with the directives of the SFWMD Governing Board re: collaboration with other Government laboratories two committees have been formed with the objective of possibly redirecting some of the \$3 Million that SFWMD pays out per year for work performed by private labs to other government labs so as to better utilize government labs overall. These two committees are:

- The Florida Governmental Laboratory Cooperative (FGLC) - This is the short term "quick Fix" committee that will be looking into opportunities for partnership now and looking into possibilities of what can be done together now to share resources available within the current structure. This "quick fix" committee will be suggesting contractual type arrangements so that those labs performing work for others can be paid.

The FGLC is starting to draft agreements. All comments are welcome, and by the same token everybody who wishes to participate is welcome.

The minutes of this FGLC will be available on the web.

- **The Steering Committee** - Long term/view committee - is looking at the entire government laboratory system in Florida in an attempt to come up with a statewide system for government labs with the objective of delivering better cost-effective services to the residents of Florida. The Governing Board takes the stand that the DEP should take the lead in this endeavor and toward that end a contract is being established with that agency.

The steering committee will propose legislation and is now working on a draft.

The FGLC had three items to discuss:

1. **Quality Assurance Guidelines** - Nubia Carabelas presented by means of a handout - Draft FGLC QA Guidelines - Version 1.1 - 11/8/00 - Please see attached to this minute.

A short discussion took place with Ms. Carabelas emphasizing that the full text of a new draft will be e-mailed and that comments are invited.

2. **Proposal for a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)** - Maxine Cheesman

Maxine Cheesman explained the difference between a contract and a MOA. A MOA can be seen as a general document specifying in some detail how we are going to operate and co-operate. A contract is an agreement between two entities to exchange lab services for payment. No MOA work can start without a contract.

The details proposal document was discussed:

How to update the list of active members

The suggestion was made to add an addendum or appendix attached to the MOA, because then it is easier to change the membership list than the MOA proper.

How will the MOA proper be approved? Before the District's board approves all the member laboratories signatures must be done. This in turn poses the question who/which lab is the keeper of the original document or should each lab have an original document?

Do members have the right of access to results and is every lab obliged to share test results?

Introduction section of MOA: involves a description of who "we" are, how we got here and what we are going to accomplish - (description of objectives).

Regarding reference to the legal authority required to enter into the MOA: Is specific legal authority required? MOA does not involve any dollar commitment. Need feedback on this issue.

Describes responsibilities of the parties. - In effect defining expectations as to adherence to QA/QC protocols and procedures as will be defined by the various lab groups.

Tim Fitzpatrick started a discussion re the protocols for flagging QA/QC conditions. Maxine said that any lab can be certified under one method or another. We should be as confident of the results as if it came out of our own lab. Reference was made to established NELAP rules.

During the discussion it was pointed out that drinking water rules were not laid out in NELAP.

Other pertinent points or questions raised:

Qualifiers differ from program to program. Which qualifiers are we going to use?

Can we expect DEP to specify what method to use for data that is to be submitted to the State?

We must try to find a way to make sure that all 25 certified labs will arrive at the same result. We cannot allow different results from labs with the same certification. This must not happen.

We need to define the QA/QC protocols to ensure compatibility.

There is a need for laboratory audits and data audits which lead to the need for a proficiency program. Sometimes a private lab will ask for additional payments for testing outside certain parameters (standards). This would pose a problem if it occurs among us - cooperative members" Under certain conditions additional contract/purchase orders may allow additional data to be furnished upon request (possible at extra charge)

It was also discussed that the MOA draft should contain certain minimum standards but it cannot and should not incorporate all details. The MOA should merely outline how we operate as a group. Thus the suggestion that the QA/QC should be an appendix/ attachment to the MOA was reiterated.

The MOA guidelines will/must ensure that all participants adhere to the same quality standards so test results are comparable.

3. Council of Florida Government Laboratories - David Hanson

David Hanson presented the organization membership plan (see attached) outlining the purpose, vision, council organization and participation criteria.

The following topics need to be addressed:

Is there a need to be NELAP certified?

What happens if certification is lost? Is notification to the membership required? Will there be a grace period allowing recovery?

Is NELAP a "MUST"?

Is lab required to notify only clients or the entire group?

Do participants need to know which labs are certified to do what work?

4. Survey Results

David Struve informed the group that the FGLC committee will meet early next year, the survey will be then compiled and a complete report will be sent out to all participants.

If you have any comments please e-mail to dstruve@sfwmd.gov

USGS info on Round Robin can be found at <http://bqs.usgs.gov/srs/index.html>

The members agreed that the next Steering Committee meeting will be some time in March or April of 2001.

